

NEWS RELEASE



United States Department of Agriculture
Rural Development

USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT INVESTS \$45 MILLION TO SPARK COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN 34 STATES

Funds To Create or Save 1,000 Jobs and 129 First Responder and Public Safety Requests Selected

Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman announced the selection of 309 business, community and Tribal transportation, business and educational loan and grant requests from 34 states. The funds are a mixture of economic and community development investments being made as part of the Bush Administration's overall efforts to help spur economic opportunities and improve the quality of life for rural Americans.

"The capital investments announced today goes to the heart of President Bush's commitment to rural America," said Veneman. "The grants will help community leaders bring new business and jobs to their community; provide fire, rescue and public safety to protect rural families and support educational opportunities that increase the ability to compete in the global marketplace."



Deputy Under Secretary for Rural Development Gilbert G. Gonzalez and Rural Development State Director Greg Branum joined Veneman in announcing that the Wright County Children's Home in Norwood will be the recipient of one of the grants. Branum said, "The grant funds, totaling \$21,370, will be used by the Children's Home to purchase a motor van to transport children to and from the Home. Rural Development is pleased to be a part of this worthwhile activity."

USDA Rural Development's mission is to deliver programs in a way that will support increasing economic opportunity and improve the quality of life of rural residents. As a venture capital entity, Rural Development provides equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure. Further information on rural programs is available at a local USDA Rural Development office or by visiting USDA's web site at www.rurdev.usda.gov, or by calling Mike Monger at 417-532-5741.

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